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This undertaking has been accomplished with the volunteer assistance of Professor R. G. AITKEN, for the simultaneous reading of the circles. No single series has been discarded; but, one series of  $45^{\circ}$  arcs, and three series of  $1^{\circ}$  arcs have been repeated, upon indications of larger accidental errors than usual, and the results combined with those of the original series. It has required, for the complete determination, 29,000 microscope readings.

R. H. TUCKER.

#### WEATHER IN AUGUST, 1896.

A rain-storm with a precipitation of nearly three-tenths of an inch on the night of August 29-30th came as a fitting climax to a most unusual August. Past experience has led to the expectation of the best observing weather of the year during this month; and a few of the earlier nights seemed to justify this expectation, the "seeing" leaving nothing to be desired. But since the tenth-there have nine cloudy nights; and an examination of the note-books of the observers shows that on the nights that were clear enough for work, the "seeing" was rated three or less (five representing the best conditions) on twelve nights. On only two nights during the present lunation were the atmospheric conditions good enough to allow the use of the thirty-six-inch refractor for lunar photography. The lower levels of the atmosphere have been filled with haze and smoke due, in great part, to immense forest fires in Washington and in British Columbia.

R. G. AITKEN.

August 31, 1896.

#### MR. LOWELL ON MARS.

The review of Mr. PERCIVAL LOWELL's book on *Mars*, printed in *Science*, Vol. IV, page 231 (and in these *Publications*, Vol. VIII, page 207) has called out a rejoinder, which is printed in *Science*, Vol. IV, page 358, and a brief reply is to be found in the same journal, Vol. IV, page 455.

THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION.

#### THE PHOTOGRAPHIC *DURCHMUSTERUNG* OF THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE OBSERVATORY (DR. DAVID GILL).

"The first volume of the Cape Photographic *Durchmusterung* containing the mean places of 152,000 stars for the Equinox 1875, derived by Professor J. C. KAPTEYN from the Cape Photographs

between the limits of Declination  $-19^{\circ}$  and  $-37^{\circ}$  (both inclusive) has been passed through press. The manuscript of Volume II of the same work, containing the places of 158,000 stars between the limits of Declination  $-38^{\circ}$  and  $-52^{\circ}$  (both inclusive) is ready for press."—From the *Report of H. M. Astronomer at the Cape of Good Hope* for the year 1895.

**STAR ATLAS.** By WINSLOW UPTON, Professor of Astronomy and Director of the LADD Observatory, BROWN University, Providence, R. I. GINN & Co., Publishers, Boston.

This Atlas is intended for those who wish to become acquainted with the constellations or to find the position of the leading double stars, variable stars, clusters or nebulae readily visible in small telescopes. It contains large charts of the heavens, with the stars prominently defined and the constellation figures in dim outline, and also auxiliary charts and tables to facilitate the use of the Atlas by teachers and students.

E. S. H.